



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Greene

Entered according to Act of Congress by J. G. Shea in the Clerk's office of the District Court of the U.S. for the Southern District of New York.

THE
PENNSYLVANIA MAGAZINE
OF
HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.

VOL. VIII.

1884.

No. 2.

DANIEL HYACINTH MARY LIÉNARD DE BEAUJEU,

COMMANDANT OF FORT DU QUESNE AND OF THE FRENCH FORCES
IN THE BATTLE OF JULY 9, 1755.

BY JOHN GILMARY SHEA.

The officer who planned the boldest operation of French arms against the English, in the struggle for supremacy in the New World, and who fell at the head of his little force when a victory, he could not have dared to promise himself, was already assured, has nevertheless failed to obtain the place in history to which he is so well entitled. His very name has slowly and recently emerged from the shades of obscurity; his native Canada and his fatherland France have done nothing to commemorate him; his very grave is unknown.

Daniel Hyacinth Mary Liénard de Beaujeu, who so bravely attacked with a petty force the finest army ever sent from England to operate against the French, was descended from a family from Dauphiné, which has left its name to the Beaujolois, one of the divisions of that ancient province. The family figures in French history from the eleventh century. In 1210 Guichard, Sire de Beaujeu, was sent by

Philip Augustus as his ambassador to the Sovereign Pontiff Innocent III. Humbert V., Sire de Beaujeu, was Constable of France, and attended the coronation of Baudouin II. as Emperor at Constantinople. Another of the name fought under St. Louis in Egypt. William de Beaujeu was Grand-master of the Templars in 1288, and was killed at the siege of Antioch in 1290. They figure in later times in the annals of the brave. The Seigneur de Beaujeu, an officer of great experience and ability, fell at the siege of Montbart in 1590; another at Fontarabia in 1638; Paul Anthony Quiqueran de Beaujeu is famous for his imprisonment at Constantinople and his daring escape in the seventeenth century. One of this brave race commanded the man-of-war sent out as part of the expedition of René Cavalier de la Salle, to operate against the rich mining country of Mexico, by way of Texas, and is now receiving tardy justice from false and groundless charges. He sustained well the reputation of his race in the naval battle of La Hogue.

One of the family, Louis Liénard de Beaujeu, born at Versailles, son of Philip, an officer in the royal guards and holding other positions at court, came to Canada before the close of the seventeenth century, to seek advancement in the marines serving in the colony. The first mention of him is as a member of the pious association of the Perpetual Adoration, established at Quebec in 1700. Two years after, he obtained a commission as ensign, and in 1704 a lieutenancy. On the 6th of September, 1706, at the age of twenty-four, he married Dénise Thérèse Migeon de Branssac, widow of Charles Juchereau, S^{ieur} de St. Denis. He prospered, obtaining a captaincy in 1711, and the Cross of St. Louis fifteen years after, and was Mayor of Quebec in 1733, and had received grants of land on Chambly River.

By his marriage he had three sons and two daughters. The eldest son, Louis, became a priest, and, after being chaplain to the Ursulines at Quebec, was confessor to Louis XVI. The second was Daniel Hyacinth Mary de Beaujeu, the hero of the Monongahela. He was born at Montreal August 19, 1711, and at an early age entered the service in which his

father held a commission.¹ He rose rapidly, showing that his ability was recognized, and in 1748 we find him a captain in the detachment of the marines which constituted the French troops in Canada. As such, he was one of the officers who attended the conference between Mr. de la Galissonnière, Governor of Canada, and the deputies of the Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, Senecas, and Tuscaroras, at the Castle of St. Louis, Quebec, November 2, 1748, when the Cantons expressed their wish to remain neutral between France and England.² He was next, it is said, commandant at Detroit.³

De Beaujeu, who had evidently had experience among these Indians, was sent in 1750 to take command at Niagara, where an adroit and able officer was required to defeat the plans of the English, and divert the trade of the western cantons of the Six Nations from the English establishment at Oswego.⁴ In August of that year he entertained at his post the Swedish naturalist, Peter Kalm, sending two of his officers to guide the traveller to the Falls of Niagara, and giving him a letter to Captain Joncaire, whose long residence there made him better acquainted than any other with everything worth knowing of the great cataract and the neighboring country.⁵ That he soon after received the Cross of St. Louis shows that Beaujeu discharged his duties with ability.

In 1755 he was sent to Fort Duquesne, with men and supplies,⁶ and was appointed commandant of that important post, which was directly menaced by attack from Virginia. M. de Contrecoeur had in the preceding winter asked to be recalled, and the Marquis Duquesne, when dispatching Cap-

¹ Daniel, *Nos Gloires Nationales*, i. p. 132-137; manuscripts furnished by the late Count Saveuse de Beaujeu.

² *N. Y. Colonial Documents*, x. p. 187-8.

³ Documents of Hon. M. Saveuse de Beaujeu.

⁴ *Doc. Col. Hist. N. Y.*, vi. p. 592.

⁵ Kalm, Letter from Albany, Sept. 2, 1750, in Bartram's *Observations on the Inhabitants, Climate, Soil, Rivers, Productions, Animals, and other matters worthy of notice*, etc., London, 1751, pp. 80, 81.

⁶ "Since Sieur de Beaujeu's arrival it must be well supplied," wrote Duquesne, July 6, 1755, "as he had carried with his brigade succors of every description." (*Doc. Col. Hist. N. Y.*, x. p. 300.)

tain de Beaujeu to relieve him, ordered Contrecoeur to remain at the fort till after the expected operations.¹

The officer thus sent to hold with scanty force the fort, which France had so boldly planted at the junction of the Allegheny and Monongahela, had no easy task assigned to him. A formidable army, commanded by General Braddock, composed of veteran English regiments, and Virginia colonial troops, well supplied with artillery, was advancing against Fort Duquesne. That post was in no condition to sustain a siege, and the force at Captain de Beaujeu's command was utterly inadequate to defend it; still less was it such as to make it at all possible to retard the march of the enemy. There seemed to be no alternative but to abandon the fort and fall back on Fort Machault and the Fort de la Rivière au Bœuf, so as to cover the important position at Niagara.

There was, indeed, a motley gathering of Indians near the fort, representing a score of tribes, from the Hurons of Lorette and the Abnakis of St. Francis, on the lower St. Lawrence, to the Ottawas of Lake Superior. But to place any reliance on their co-operation in such an emergency seemed impossible. Yet Beaujeu could not bring himself to wait tamely there to be crushed, or retreat in inglorious haste. He would not give up Fort Duquesne without striking a blow. Canadian officers of that city had great contempt for the slow movements of the English. Buoyed up by this, Beaujeu resolved to advance on the enemy and form an ambuscade where the road they had taken crossed the Monongahela. Indian scouting parties had kept up regular reports of the advance of Braddock, and knew the topography of the country. The Chevalier de la Perade, soon to fall beside his commander, had sallied out on the 6th of July, and returned the next day to announce the proximity and strength of the enemy. Beaujeu resolved to march forth

¹ "Annales" of Mère de la Nativité, Ursuline, cited in *Les Ursulines de Québec*, ii. p. 276. This explains the presence of Contrecoeur at the time of the battle, and his reassuming the command on Beaujeu's death, as well as the consequent error in those who spoke of him as having had uninterrupted command, and of Beaujeu as acting under him.

with all the troops that could be spared; not a dissenting voice seems to have been raised, and the 8th of July was spent in preparing to take the field. But, when Beaujeu visited the Indian camp and announced to the chiefs the decision of the French officers, there was no response. To his earnest appeal they at last cried: "What, Father, do you wish to die and sacrifice us? The English are more than four thousand men, and we only eight hundred, and you wish to go and attack them! You see at once that you have no sense! We must have till to-morrow to decide."

There was no alternative. Precious as the moments were, Beaujeu was compelled to defer his march till morning. At daybreak, on the 9th of July, the French officers and soldiers gathered in the little "chapel of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin at the Beautiful River," as that in the fort was styled. The commandant knelt in the confessional before the gray-robed chaplain, the Recollect Father Denys Baron, and, when mass was said, received holy communion at his hands. Evidently he did not expect to return alive to the fort of which he had so recently assumed command.¹ Then the little party marched gayly out, numbering 72 regular soldiers, 146 Canadians. They halted at the wigwams, and Beaujeu asked the decision of the dusky allies of France. The chiefs sullenly replied: "We cannot march." "I am determined to go and meet the enemy," replied Beaujeu. "Will you let your Father go alone? I am sure to beat them." As the French moved on, the Indians, led by the Huron, Athanase of Lorette, and by Pontiac, followed, till

¹ "Ayant esté en confesse et fait ses devotions le mesme jour." (*Régistre du Fort Du Quesne*, p. 28; *Relations Diverses*, p. 49.) The Government scribe who copied the *Régistre* at the Prothonotary's office, Montreal, wrote Leonard for Liénard; but the original, as examined by my antiquarian friend, Rev. Felix Martin, was clearly Liénard. I may here note that the statement made in *Potter's American Monthly*, that the *Régistre* was printed at the expense of N. B. Craig, Esq., is incorrect. The volumes of my Cramoisy series were all printed at my own cost, as Mr. Munsell's books will show. I did not receive any aid from Mr. Craig in the matter. The Carter-Brown Catalogue has similarly unfounded statements as to other of my volumes.

the band (from many a tribe) numbered more than six hundred.

Beaujeu's plan had been to form an ambuscade at one of the crossings of the Monongahela; but the sun had passed the meridian when, as he approached the crossing nearest to the fort, he came in view of the van of the English army ascending the second slope from the river side. Gordon, the English engineer, who was with the carpenters in advance, was the first to see the French troop led by Beaujeu, who came bounding on, rifle in hand, his hunting dress relieved only by the silver gorget which betokened his rank. As he cheered on his men, hat in hand, the engineer's party fell back on Gage's command, and at once the quick fire of the French startled the whole line. The Indians had as promptly glided along the woods on either flank of the English pickets and opened fire. Gage formed his men and returned the fire in front with musketry and grape; on the flanks the English fired at invisible foes, except where an Indian would dart out to scalp a soldier as he fell, when the line began to yield. At the third volley from the English, de Beaujeu fell, pierced through the forehead, it is said, with a ball. His death did not dishearten his men; Captain Dumas, assuming command, kept up the fight, the disorder in the English force increasing under the murderous fire, until an attempt was made to reform the line, which the Indians, who had secured a commanding hill, took for a general retreat. With renewed yells they dashed into the English line, and the rout became a reality. French and Indians pursued, Washington with his provincials in vain endeavoring to meet the French and Indians by their own tactics. The history of the defeat is well known. Washington himself said: "We have been beaten, shamefully beaten, by a handful of men!"

Thus fell Daniel Liénard de Beaujeu, in the arms of victory, dying as nobly as any of his crusader ancestors on the fields of Palestine, Egypt, or Tunis; and dying more gloriously, for not one even of his gallant race ever achieved so great a success, or turned a desperate cause into a triumphant defeat of so superior a force.

As the tide of battle rolled away, his body lay on the field; but when the warriors returned to count the spoil, and some that fell were interred on the spot, the body of the brave commandant was carried back to the fort. His brave comrades, Lieutenant de Carqueville and Ensign de la Perade, were interred on the 10th. The body of de Beaujeu seems to have been kept in honor till the 12th, when it too was committed to the earth in the cemetery of the fort, as the chaplain states in the entry in his register:

“Burial of Mr. De Beaujeux, Commandant of Fort Duquesne. The year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-five, the ninth of July, was killed in the battle given to the English, and the same day as above, Mr. Liénard Daniel, esquire, Sieur de Beaujeu, captain in the infantry, Commandant of Fort Duquesne and of the army, who was aged about forty-five years, having been at confession and performed his devotions the same day. His body was interred on the twelfth of the same month in the cemetery of Fort Duquesne under the title of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin at the Beautiful River, and this with the ordinary ceremonies by us, Recollect priest, undersigned, King’s chaplain in said fort, in testimonial whereof we have signed

FRAN DENYS BARON, P. R.,
Chaplain.”¹

All trace of this cemetery disappeared when Fort Pitt was erected, and nothing remained to show the spot where the French commander in the battle of the Monongahela lay. In the busy city that now occupies the contested point of land, no tablet or memorial commemorates his services or death. A modest chapel in a modest church, whose pastor, the Rev. A. A. Lambing, has sought to gather memorials of the past, alone revives the name and memory of the chapel where Beaujeu last knelt in prayer, and where, doubtless, a solemn requiem was said over his remains.

While the second empire existed, I endeavored to excite the interest of the French government in the captain who defeated a well-equipped, well-officered English army. Not a tablet to his memory, however, was raised.

¹ *Régistre du Fort du Quesne*, p. 28.

Beaujeu did not generally, even in French works, receive the honor of having planned and carried out the movement which resulted in such a victory for the French arms. Even the official report gives prominence to Contrecoeur. Yet the Register of the Fort, written by the chaplain under the eye of Contrecoeur, calls de Beaujeu "Commandant of the Fort and the army." The account by de Godefroy, an officer of the garrison, does not mention Contrecoeur at all, and attributes the whole operation to de Beaujeu, whom it styles Commandant.¹ Another "Relation" from the *Dépôt de la Guerre*, with details that seem to come from one present in the fort, also speaks of de Beaujeu as "commandant."² These certainly outweigh the opposite statements, which were evidently compiled in Quebec or France from such material as was sent to them.

The Chevalier de Beaujeu obtained the Seigneurie of La Colle on Chambly River in 1733, and a revival of that granted to his father, which seems to have lapsed. On the 4th of March, 1737, he married Michelle Elizabeth de Foucault, of the family of the Counts of that name. He gave his bride a bracelet which contained a miniature of himself, which is still preserved among the heirlooms of the family in Canada. From a copy of this, made for me by the amiable Count Saveuse de Beaujeu, the portrait which accompanies this sketch was engraved. By this marriage the Chevalier de Beaujeu had a son, who went to France after the English conquest of Canada, and a daughter, who married Major de Charly, and with her husband settled finally at Tours in France.³ The family in Canada descends from his brother, Louis Liénard Villemonde or Villemomble de Beaujeu, who was commandant at Michilimackinac, and, remaining in the colony, served under the English flag in the war of the American Revolution.

¹ *Relations Diverses*, pp. 9-16.

² *Ib.*, p. 18.

³ Daniel, *Nos Gloires Nationales*, i. p. 142.